

A strategy shared by the Government and the organizations to promote volunteering

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In 2008, [the Catalan government](#) launched a National Plan. It was a document that had been elaborated together with the **organizations, volunteers** and other actors involved in this sector. The plan consisted of 3 main lines of action, 16 strategic lines and 86 measures, and it was implemented by the Government between 2008 and 2011. It comprised a list with all measures to be taken by the administration in order to strengthen the organizations, **improve the volunteers' capacities** and raise public awareness.

This year there is a new volunteering strategy starting in Catalonia. We talk to three people involved in its elaboration to get to know it better. On the one hand, Marc Viñas, who is Assistant Director-General of Social Cooperation and Volunteering (Catalan Government). On the other, two representatives of the Catalan volunteering entities: Albert Riu, Technical Secretary of the [Moviment de Centres d'Esplai Cristians Catalans](#) (MCECC) and Eulàlia Mas, Director of [the Federació Catalana de Voluntariat Social](#) (FCVS).

A strategy that concentrates efforts on two areas

The new volunteering strategy that is about to be launched to replace the former plan aims to concentrate efforts. Marc Viñas explains that “the [new] Plan has made an effort in terms of reduction and realism, but most of all in the sense of pragmatism, so as to focus on the real, concrete and urgent challenges of associative life and volunteering that had to be faced”. In this sense, according to Albert Riu the two main strategies are “on the one hand the permanent strategy of volunteering that refers to funding, training and recognition; and on the other, the Strategy for Sustainability and Good Governance of social entities, that fosters good practices regarding governance, transparency, accountability and management”. This strategy has built upon the analysis of the reality of volunteering and of the organizations involved. As Eulàlia Mas says, it is about a “reasonable, feasible [plan], attentive to the region-specific needs, adapted to the reality of social entities, and acknowledging their efforts to improve the strategies for action”.

According to Eulàlia Mas “what is really interesting about this Plan are the vectors that instigate the organizations to shift the paradigm regarding their interaction with other actors, or in terms of good governance, communication and transparency, or with respect to democratic participation”.

A shared strategy: close collaboration between all actors

One of the virtues of the new strategic approach of 2014, as Marc Viñas says, is that “the Plan aims to involve the Catalan Government, the local administrations, the social entities, enterprises, universities and any other actor present on the territory that might have some kind of impact” on this issue. The implication of the organizations in this shared strategy has been articulated mainly through the Board of Associationism and Volunteering. It is an advisory body of the Catalan Government, that involves 18 entities which are representative of **the world of volunteering and social action**. Albert Riu says “Within the frame of this Board, the organizations themselves have contributed to the shaping, prioritization and design of this Plan, and this makes it more efficient, as it appeals and concerns to all actors' action”.

Unlike the first Plan, with this new strategy the Government wants those entities that took part in its design to get also involved in its implementation. As Marc Viñas explains, “during this second phase, we are successfully implementing the Plan, both on the part of the Government and the volunteering sector itself, and all the rest of actors involved too”.

Evaluation: an indispensable element

The former plan was evaluated in 2012 and the conclusions (available at voluntariat.org) have been taken into account to define the new volunteering strategy. According to Marc Viñas evaluation is a key aspect of this plan: "The Plan, as far as it is a public policy, must be evaluated from both the quantitative and qualitative point of view, measuring the real impact of its implementation. Otherwise we wouldn't have the elements required to continuously implement the actions that must support this sector".

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Resum:

In 2008 the first [National Plan on Associative Life and Volunteering of Catalonia](#) (PNAV) was approved. Nowadays a new strategy is being developed to promote volunteering at a regional level. Some of the actors involved explain the process that is being followed and the priorities that have been set.



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